

Kansas Arts Commission

Framing Our Future: The Economic Impact of the Arts

March 4, 2009

Notes from Regional Groups

Discussion Questions Posed to Each Group:

The Kansas economic impact of the arts information is important to disseminate among the following stakeholders in each region of Kansas: media, business leadership, elected leadership, artists, cultural organizations and other community institutions, and the general public.

If widely known, this information will change the way the public and key leadership think about the arts when considering funding support, tax credits, civic and community planning.

With these in mind, each group, representing different regions of Kansas, were asked the following questions:

1. How would you approach reaching each group with the information?
2. Whom would you enlist to help?
3. Who is responsible for doing what?
4. What are the mechanisms for reporting back (after disseminating the information) to other members of the group meeting here today and to the Kansas Arts Commission?

Opportunities that Emerged from the Discussions:

- Communications and assistance are vital
- Obtain names of donors to political campaigns and enlist them to go to candidates for support of the arts
- Work together to stretch resources

Biggest Challenges that were Expressed:

- Limited time and limited people to do the work that must be done
- Information overload
- Being specific in requests and shaping a clear, concise message
- Engaging people of color
- Lack of motivation
- Need a discussion forum for good ideas – a public square

Lawrence/Topeka Area Group:

Key Idea: Building on the network and coalitions shaped during the earlier local economic impact study, create a strong network with a new agenda.

To reach the media and general public, the group identified the following sources and groups:

Media

- Lawrence Journal World
- Topeka Capital Journal
- Topeka Magazine
- Metro News (Topeka)
- Student newspapers (The Daily Kansan)
- Kansas Public Radio

Arts Audiences/Attendees

- E-blasts emanating from different organizations

General Public

- Rotary Clubs
- Chamber Board of Directors
- Elected officials
- Boards of Directors of arts and community organizations
- Personal connections and relationships

Whom do we enlist to help?

- Art educators
- Music educators
- Women/women's groups
- Partnerships with universities and community colleges
- Nonprofits need notification
- Lawrence Arts Roundtable
- Individual artists (via Lawrence Arts Center)

Who is responsible for doing what?

Visit with editorial staff at Lawrence Journal World – Mary Doveton will talk to Judy,
Ann Evans will contact Terry Rombeck and Ann Gardner
KPR – David Leamon – Hank Booth – Mary Doveton and Steve Hedden
Topeka Capital Journal - Anita Wolgast and Grant Glenn
The Kansan – Katherine Logan
Fine Arts Director for 497 – Julie Perin

Kansas City Area Group:

Key Idea: Knowledge is power; numbers are power. Work together and teach people how to advocate.

- Utilize arts organizations as they are the most involved and have the most to gain
- Kansas Citizens for the Arts can serve as the organizing unit and call upon the various groups in the Kansas City region to come together
- Form a speakers bureau to speak to arts clubs, organizations
- Reach the arts and artist organizations in Wyandotte and Johnson County
 - Local Kansas Citizens for the Arts members to facilitate and organize
 - Hold a KCA arts network meeting at the YWCA
 - Start an ArtWalk
 - Invite to central meeting
 - Give presentation about economic impact survey (state & Kansas City area)
 - Provide information to them, including the website link to help them advocate for the arts
 - Encourage advocacy through KCA because there is strength in numbers
 - Combine groups to inform and give presentations
- Contact district representatives of Kansas Music Educators Association, Kansas Art Education Association and Kansas Thespians
 - Teach them how to advocate
 - Model the effort after KMEA: divide into districts

Central Kansas Area Group

Key Idea: There are many places where members of the community cross over. Use those relationships, key people, key activities.

Media

- Make direct contact with arts reporters
- Create focused events to educate media
- Write a weekly or guest column for local newspapers
- Build on arts coalitions in communities

Leadership

- Sponsor arts events and invite leadership to attend
- Create partnerships
- Speak to business associations
- Board memberships
- Mutual attendance at each others' events
- Host chamber of commerce after-hours events

Elected Officials

- Schedule appearances for them at arts events
- Make direct asks: educate first, sell second
- Social event – cross over with different organizations and groups

Artists/Cultural Organizations

- Formal – meet and arrange connections
- Informal – party together – brown bag lunch events
- Communicate with students through college and university departments and YouTube

General Public

- Reach out with special offers
- Arts feature stories
- Arts groups sponsor events
- Work with church groups

Wichita/Western Kansas Area Group

Key Idea: Say the same message; create allies.

Media

- News release
- Send to multiple contacts
- Provide a day's notice for local events or a week if the event is out of town
- Send it to the assignment desk not only to arts' beat writers

Business/Leadership

- Contact Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development divisions
- Contact specific businesses
- Contact convention & visitors bureaus
 - The smaller the community, the better these lines of communication tend to work
- Invite business leadership to luncheons, invite them to hear and see arts programming
- Publicize commitments from businesses

Elected officials

- Have a story, make it short, and tell the same story
- Find out who supported the elected officials during elections
- Establish relationships and make them ongoing
- Get on mailing lists/email lists
- Give opportunity to be visible/participate at events
- Always introduce them
- Ask to participate in board service (ex-officio)
- Utilize KAC best practices

Artists and arts organizations

- Start or build a coalition with representatives from artistic community, schools, other organizations, business community
- Have a purpose
- Develop an advocacy plan
- Identify targets
- Select a strong leader
- Advocacy plan
- Share marketing (i.e., share ads and event info/data)

General Public

- Utilize media releases
- Newsletters
- Civic group presentations
- Facebook
- Newspapers